

Forest Plan Amendment Number 16
**DECISION MEMO, NONSIGNIFICANT AMENDMENT TO THE
CUSTER NATIONAL FOREST LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
CUSTER NATIONAL FOREST, MONTANA, NORTH DAKOTA, AND SOUTH DAKOTA
AMENDMENT NUMBER 16, DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING VISUAL CONDITION
April 1993**

DECISION MEMO

Decision: It is my decision to amend the Forest Plan to add a description of Existing Visual Condition (EVC) classes to the Forest Plan. A description of EVC was not included in the Forest Plan Glossary.

Rationale for the Decision: The lack of a description of EVC classes has lead to misunderstandings and has created problems in defining the EVC of areas when developing environmental assessments and environmental impact statements.

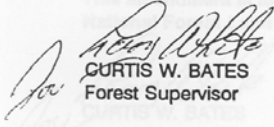
NONSIGNIFICANT NFMA AMENDMENT: This decision does not significantly alter any of the long-term projections for resource outputs on the Custer National Forest. Therefore, this amendment is non-significant under NFMA (36 CFR 219.10(f)), and Forest Service Manual 1922.51, item 1 and 3.

IMPLEMENTATION: This decision will be implemented upon public notice. This Decision Notice is public notice and will be sent to all those who have requested notice of Forest Plan amendments and those who have participated in the amendment process. In addition, notice of this decision will be published in local newspapers.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL: This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 217. Any written notice of appeal to this decision must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 217.9, "Content of Notice of Appeal". As a minimum, a written notice of appeal filed with the reviewing officer must: 1) List the name, address, and telephone number of the appellant; 2) Identify the decision about which the requester objects; 3) Identify the document in which the decision is contained by title and subject, date of the decision, and name and title of the Deciding Officer; 4) Identify specifically that portion of the decision or decision document to which the requester objects; 5) State the reasons for objection, including issues of fact, law, regulation, or policy and if applicable specifically how the decision violates law, regulation, or policy, and ; 6) Identify the specific change(s) in the decision that the appellant seeks, (36 CFR 217.9(b)). A written notice of appeal must be filed within 45 days of the date of this decision and sent to:

US Forest Service, Northern Region
David F. Jolly, Regional Forester
PO Box 7669
Missoula, MT 59801

CONTACT PERSON: Additional information can be obtained from:
Custer National Forest, PO Box 2556
Billings, Montana 59103, phone (406) 657-6361
Leroy White, Planning Program Officer


CURTIS W. BATES
Forest Supervisor

5/21/93
Date

**Forest Plan Amendment Number 16
Custer National Forest
Billings, Montana**

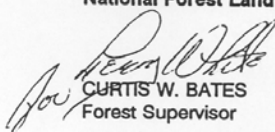
It is my decision to amend the Custer National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan by adding a description of Existing Visual Condition (EVC) classes at page 128. The descriptions are also to be added to the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Custer National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan at page 358.

Existing Visual Condition (EVC)

Existing Visual Condition (EVC) Classes are defined as follows:

CLASS	DEFINITION
EVC 1 Untouched	Areas in excess of 5,000 acres in which only ecological changes have taken place, except for low impact trails and fences.
EVC 2 Unnoticed	Changes in the landscape are not visually evident unless pointed out. This also includes low visual impact two-track trails and roads that may or may not be visible on most aerial photographs.
EVC 3 Minor Disturbance	Changes in the landscape are noticed by the casual visitor, but they do not attract attention. The natural appearance of the landscape still remains dominant. This includes developed pastures and roads and fields not associated with farmsteads.
EVC 4 Disturbed	Changes in the landscape are easily noticed and may attract attention. This includes cropland or highly developed hayfields (structural irrigation and canals). Well-designed oil fields are most always included as their size and influence over the landscape is not entirely mitigated. The natural appearance of the landscape is definitely impacted in fields with well spacing of 160 acres or less.
EVC 5 Major Disturbance	Changes in the landscape are strong and would be obvious to anyone. These changes stand out as a dominating impression of the landscape. Oil fields that are not designed or have no mitigation measures as well as other activities that have major landscape impacts are included.
EVC 6 Drastic Disturbance	Changes in the landscape are in glaring contrast to the natural appearance. Almost anyone would be displeased with the effect and agree that rehabilitation is required.

This amendment is to be added to page 128 of the Forest Plan, and page 358 of the FEIS for the Custer National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.


CURTIS W. BATES
Forest Supervisor

5/21/93
Date